

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for recovering a catalyst from a catalyst body comprising a carrier having a catalyst layer formed on at least a part of the surface thereof, said method comprising:

(a) a step of forming an overcoat layer on the surface of said catalyst layer, and

(b) a step of allowing said catalyst body having said overcoat layer formed thereon to stand under the condition to result in a difference in expansibility or contractility exhibited by said overcoat layer from that exhibited by said carrier,

wherein exfoliation of said catalyst layer from said carrier is permitted by means of the resulting difference in expansibility or contractility under the condition.

2. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 1,

wherein said overcoat layer is formed by coating the surface of said catalyst layer with an overcoat agent having a hardening capability in said step (a), and

said condition in said step (b) is set to be a condition in which said overcoat layer is hardened.

3. A method for recovering a catalyst from a catalyst body comprising a carrier having a catalyst layer formed on at least a part of the surface thereof, said method comprising:

(a) a step of forming an overcoat layer on the surface

of said catalyst layer with an overcoat agent having a hardening capability, and

(b) a step of allowing said catalyst body having said overcoat layer formed thereon to stand under the condition in which said overcoat layer is hardened,

wherein exfoliation of said catalyst layer from said carrier is permitted by means of said hardening.

4. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 3 wherein said condition in said step (b) is heating, air blowing or leaving to stand at room temperature.

5. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 3 wherein said overcoat agent comprises an inorganic binder.

6. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 5 wherein said inorganic binder is selected from the group consisting of clay, cement, silica sol, alumina sol, titania sol and any combinations thereof.

7. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 3 wherein said overcoat agent comprises an organic compound.

8. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 7 wherein said organic compound is a polymer.

9. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 8 wherein said polymer is cellulose.

10. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 7 further comprising a step (c) of heating said overcoat layer formed on the surface of said catalyst layer to allow combustion

of said organic compound, following the step (b).

11. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 3 wherein said catalyst layer contains a metal oxide, and said overcoat agent contains said metal oxide.

12. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 11 wherein said metal oxide is zirconium oxide.

13. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 3 wherein said catalyst layer comprises a noble metal.

14. The method for recovering a catalyst according to claim 3 wherein said carrier comprises ceramics or a metal.

15. A catalyst recovered by the method for recovering a catalyst according to any one of claims 1 to 14.

16. A catalyst including a ground catalyst recovered by the method for recovering a catalyst according to any one of claims 1 to 14, as a raw material.

17. A method for recovering a carrier from a catalyst body comprising said carrier having a catalyst layer formed on at least a part of the surface thereof, said method comprising:

(a) a step of forming an overcoat layer on the surface of said catalyst layer with an overcoat agent having a hardening capability, and

(b) a step of allowing said catalyst body having said overcoat layer formed thereon to stand under the condition in which said overcoat layer is hardened,

wherein exfoliation of said catalyst layer from said

carrier is permitted by means of said hardening.

18. A carrier recovered by the method for recovering a carrier according to claim 17.